

My name is Robert Sommer and I am Vice President & General Manager of KBRW AM & FM in Barrow, Alaska. We are a sole-service community owned station covering 88-thousand square miles with our primary stations, five translators, and one repeater. I tell you this because for most of the residents that are in my broadcast area, we are their only source of radio information, and for some, their only source for any information. We also broadcast some of our programs in the Native American Inupiat language. Native Americans make up over 75% of our audience.

As a sole-service station, we strive to provide a wide range of quality programming to our listeners. But with only 24-hours in a day, we can only do so much. We are looking forward to being able to provide multiplexing of the digital audio signal.

Current technology limits our radio station to providing only one programming service to our audience. With digital broadcasting and multicasting capabilities, we will be able to develop new and diverse programming formats aimed directly at our targeted audience. It will also allow us to target other minorities within our audience on other channels.

We currently broadcast all work sessions and meetings of City Council, Borough Assembly, and school board. Also, U.S. Fish & Wildlife, State Fish & Game, BLM, EPA, and for many other local, state and federal agencies. With multicasting I would be able to have a channel for these meeting and not have to interrupt our regular programming. We would also use a channel in cooperation with the local school district and community college in furthering education.

With multiplexing the options are endless. We also have a goal of targeting our population of Native Americans where English is their second language. All this would be possible with very little increase in cost.

As a community owned station, our mission is to serve the public to the best of our ability. The potential use of SAC technology will help us achieve that goal and continue our ability to serve the public better into the future.